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with the rise of unions, platforms were put in place by which various groups could voice their grievances. Chapters seven and eight move beyond the more commonly studied focus of immigrant groups in relation to the Anglo-mainstream. Nayar instead highlights the multifaceted intercultural interactions of Punjabis and other communities, particularly First Nations. The creation of religious and cultural spaces allowed Punjabis to get established within larger public spheres, thus moving beyond most immigrants' primary initial aims of simply acquiring greater economic security. Perhaps most enlightening are the depictions of intercultural events where traditional Punjabi floats moved beyond only displaying elements of Punjabi culture, and also included coastal emblems, such as the orca, thereby continuing to strengthen relations with First Nations communities.

Chapters nine and ten look at what Nayar labels the 'second journey' of Punjabis relocating and reestablishing themselves in urban centres after their sojourn in remote regions. According to Nayar, this relocation involved a departure from an identity based on 'cultural synergy; to an ethnic insularity, tending to stay apart from broader Canadian society within metropolitan areas'. Here Nayar builds on her earlier work on ethnic identification, utilizing narratives that depict processes of 'being a part of' and 'being apart from' mainstream society, including a renegotiation of both their ethnic identity and their identity as Canadians, including an examination of inter-cultural generational differences.

Kamala Nayar's *The Punjabis in British Columbia. Location, Labour, First Nations and Multiculturalism* is an important contribution to migration, diaspora and Canada studies in that she challenges traditional tropes of inquiry of Punjabi migration patterns beyond the Canadian metropolis and Punjabi/immigrant relations with the Anglo-Canadian mainstream. She also offers a solid examination, through extensive historical and ethnographic research, much of it through the first-person narrative voice, into the psycho-social processes of agency, resiliency and adaptability, not only for the largely studied Punjabi-Canadian male populace, but also Punjabi women's work and narrative, a glaring dearth in most studies of the Punjabi-Canadian community.

Doris R. Jakobsh

University of Waterloo

Tariq Rahman, *From Hindi to Urdu: A Social and Political History*, (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2011) 476 pp. ISBN 9780199063130 (hb), PKR 1,095.

Urdu is the only national language of Pakistan. It is the official language of five states in India and is one of twenty-two scheduled languages according to the Indian Constitution. The Urdu language is also mutually intelligible to Hindi, at the spoken level. However, the relationship between Urdu and Hindi is not as simple in the history of South Asia as it would appear now (Shackle and Snell 1990). There have been a lot of political, ideological, and historical debates on

the relationship between the two languages. Rahman's well researched book *From Hindi to Urdu* offers such debates from a historical perspective by discussing the origin and development of the Urdu language. Although the name Urdu started to be used for the language in the eighteenth century (pp.18–54), Rahman has traced its roots centuries earlier, intertwined with the development of the Hindustani language, which later split into Hindi and Urdu. Rahman has supported his arguments in the book by using excerpts of classical texts like those of Amir Khusrau (pp.66–78) as well as personal interviews that he carried out with linguists, educationists, and historians over several years.

In the first three chapters, after the introduction, Rahman presents the historiography of Urdu, various names attributed to the language at the various stages of its development as well as the literary, cultural, and political connotations associated with it in the course of history. During the British Raj, the controversy over Urdu and Hindi contributed to the formulation of the two-nation theory, leading to the Pakistan Movement. The two languages came to be regarded as distinct from each other by their respective scholars and speakers. One of the main reasons for this distinction has been that Hindi has been relatively more influenced by Sanskrit whereas Urdu has been more influenced by Arabic and Persian. Rahman analyses various theories about the Sanskrit and non-Sanskrit roots of Urdu within the contexts of religion and politics in the history of the subcontinent. In the subsequent five chapters, Rahman presents the relationship of the British government with Urdu and Hindi as the languages of Muslims and Hindus, respectively. In the princely states, Muslim rulers patronised Urdu because of its close relationship with Islamic culture and its role as an identity marker for Muslims. Similarly, Muslim scholars wrote a lot of religious literature in this language. Consequently, Urdu now has a huge Islamic literature, probably richer than any other South Asian languages. This literature is not just limited to translations and commentaries of the Qur'an, but many other forms of religious poetry such as *hamd*, *naat*, and *marsiya* as well. Therefore, Urdu predominantly became an Islamic language. Its Perso-Arabic script, which distinguishes it from Hindi's Devanagiri script, became another reason for its popularity among Muslim readers. However, Rahman dispels the perception that Urdu has only been used in religious writings by Muslims. He provides various examples, particularly from the *ghazal* form of Urdu poetry, to argue that eroticism and romance have also been an essential part of the Urdu literature.

While Punjabi remains an important language for everyday communication for its speakers in various parts of Punjab, it has been especially important for Sikhs because of their religion. In Pakistani Punjab, although Punjabi and Saraiki are also part of the official curriculum at various educational levels, Urdu is the medium of education, or the language of explanation in English medium education. Rahman has highlighted that Urdu has been considered as a means to attaining better economic opportunities in Pakistan due to its official status and support from the ruling elites. Similarly, a vast majority of the younger generation prefer to speak Urdu rather than their native languages for this reason. Chapters ten and eleven explain the significance and role of Urdu in

contemporary employment and education in Pakistan. In universities, English is the medium of education and examination, and it enjoys prestige and offers better chances of employment and working overseas, which Rahman (1997) has also discussed elsewhere as a strategy by the ruling elites to make themselves distinct from the common people. In schools and colleges, with the exception of some elite institutions, as mentioned above, Urdu still remains a language of education. In the last three chapters, before his conclusion, Rahman discusses the role of Urdu in print and electronic media in Pakistan. The majority of the national daily newspapers are in Urdu, except a few in English which have a limited readership. Similarly, the use of Urdu in the radio, television and cinema, particularly Bollywood movies, has paved its way to being the language of the future. This significance of Urdu also prompts the use of the language in modern technology such as computers and mobile phones. This area is beyond the scope of this book, focusing as it does on history, but it can be an important aspect of studying the contemporary relationship of Urdu and Hindi, given the increasing use of Romanised script for both the languages in social media and mobile text messages, whilst also taking into account the historical perspectives discussed by Rahman.

Rahman has mentioned how various languages and dialects of Hindustani have shaped modern Urdu, and how, now that Urdu is more rigorously influencing and being influenced by many regional languages of Pakistan, the divide between Urdu and Hindi has become a point of exploration in the current scenario. On the one hand, Urdu has been among the major sources of ethnic conflicts in Pakistan, for example in the case of the separation of Bangladesh, and until recently in the conflict between Sindhi speakers and Urdu speakers in Karachi. On the other hand, Urdu plays an important role for a unified Pakistani identity. For example, Urdu as a medium of communication between Punjabis and other ethnic groups in Pakistan, in more or less the same way as Hindi and English are used in India, is giving new dimensions to Punjabi identity in relation to the broader national identity. Whilst linguists and social historians will find *From Hindi to Urdu* a marvellous treasure, particularly useful in the context of South Asia, it also has a lot to offer to political scientists and policy makers in exploring the role of language in educational policy, religious identity, and ethnic politics.

References

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Muhammad Aurang Zeb Mughal

University of Durham